

The Monthly Minute

With State Senator John Pappageorge
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Pappageorge Bills See Action in the Senate

Senate Bill 1066-Improve Roadway Safety

I introduced Senate Bill (SB) 1066 recently to make our roads safer. This bill would allow motorists issued a citation for a moving violation the opportunity to waive the points associated with the infraction if they satisfactorily complete a certified basic driver improvement course and pay all fees and charges associated with the offense. The course must contain curriculum set forth in the defensive driving course instructor manual published by the National Safety Council.

The Senate Committee on Transportation recently reported SB 1066 out of committee with favorable recommendation. It will go before the full Senate for a vote. I'm grateful to the committee members who supported my bill to help make the roads safer for all Michigan residents. For further details about the proposal, please click [here](#).

Senate Bill 1117-Establish a Time Frame to Set "Budget Targets"

I introduced SB 1117 to address the problem that I discussed in my [October Newsletter](#). The reason we came so close to a government shutdown last fall is because the long-standing accepted practice of setting target budget numbers that deal only with real money was thrown out the window. SB 1117 would require in law that budget targets be set by May 30th of each year. If the Governor and the designated legislators do not agree to budget targets by this deadline, they will be forced to meet in continuous session until an agreement is reached. This legislation received testimony in the Senate Appropriations Committee this week.

Upcoming Pappageorge Events

March 12th - South Oakland Business Expo

Royal Oak Farmers Market

Visit Senator Pappageorge's booth where you can meet his District Representative, Corinne Khederian, get updated on business-related policy, and pick up free publications. For information on attending the expo, click [here](#).

March 15th - Royal Oak St. Patrick's Day Parade

Royal Oak

Senator Pappageorge and his volunteers are participating in the Royal Oak St. Patrick's Day Parade. It starts at 11:00 a.m. at Royal Oak Middle School and heads south on Washington to Seventh Street. Click [here](#) for more information.

March 18th - Troy Senior Expo

Troy Community Center

Come visit up to 90 vendors in the Health, Housing and Financial services areas who will be at the Troy Senior Expo to provide useful information to area seniors. Make sure to stop by Senator Pappageorge's booth, where his District Representative, Corinne Khederian, will be available to discuss senior issues and hand out information from the Senator. Click [here](#) for more information.

Sen. Pappageorge Applauds Approval of Food Bank Donation Tax Credit

The Senate passed legislation recently to help stimulate donations to food banks across the state by granting tax credits to individuals making food donations.

"What's the difference whether you make a monetary donation or bring in non-perishable items that all food banks desperately need," Pappageorge said. "People who find it in their hearts to do the right thing and make a food donation should receive the same tax credit as those who donate money."

Under current law, taxpayers may receive a credit of up to \$100 (or \$200 for married couples filing

joint returns) for cash contributions made to homeless shelters, food kitchens and food banks. Donations of food items are currently not tax deductible.

Senate Bill 150 expands the credit to include the value of food items donated to these organizations. Similar legislation was introduced last session.

"All good deeds should be rewarded," Pappageorge said. "It doesn't make sense to differentiate between food and monetary donations to food banks. I'm glad to see the bill remedying this oversight advance toward becoming law."

SB 150 now goes to the House of Representatives for further consideration.



Senate Approves SAVE the Children Program

The state Senate recently passed a bill to help prevent early learning problems and give students the skills they need to succeed in school and life.

Senate Bill 1039, co-sponsored by Senator Pappageorge, would empower school districts to identify problems early, intervene before children begin to struggle and fail, and reduce inappropriate referrals to special education.

"Too often children are passed from grade to grade even though the early warning signs are there," said Pappageorge. "Allowing intermediate school districts to create an early intervening program will help

educators monitor the children who are struggling and provide a strategy for success."

The measure would allow intermediate school districts to develop and make available to their constituent districts and to public school academies a model early intervening program for children in kindergar-

ten through third grade.

Each school district's SAVE program would instruct classroom teachers and support staff on how to monitor individual student learning, and provide specific support or learning strategies to students as early as possible.

SB 1039 now heads to the Michigan House of Representatives for consideration.



March is Reading Month

Whether we are checking food labels, filling out tax forms, scanning the classifieds or casting a vote, reading is something many of us take for granted at home and at work. Yet millions of Americans struggle with the written word, and this frustration develops at an early age.

March is Reading Month and it's hard to overestimate the importance of reading. The ability to read is the foundation for success in school and in life. We know that children who love to read love to learn, enjoying greater success in other subjects as well. On the other hand, students who cannot read well are more likely to struggle in school and even drop out.

But there is much we can do outside of the classroom and it begins at home. Educators suggest even very young children can benefit from these reading tips:

- ◆ Read to your child every day.
- ◆ Encourage your child to read to you.
- ◆ Help your child get a library card and use it often.
- ◆ Give a book as a gift for birthdays and special occasions.
- ◆ Keep books and newspapers in a prominent place in your home.
- ◆ READ! Let your child see how much you value reading.

**See page 4
for a bookmark
that readers of all
ages can use.**

Of course, reading is more than the means to a diploma or a better paycheck - reading is fun, too! It opens the door to a world of adventure, discovery and imagination. As a lifelong reader, that's the message I give to students in the elementary schools I visit as a guest reader this month. I hope you have the opportunity to share your love of reading with a special young person in your life, too.

National Consumer Protection Week: March 2-8



If consumer fraud was a legitimate business, it would be a booming one with plenty of "customers."

A recent report by the Michigan Attorney General identified credit and financial concerns, such as predatory lending and identity theft, as the top consumer complaints received by the office in 2007. On a national scale, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) collected over 800,000 consumer fraud and identity theft complaints, with losses totaling more than \$1.2 billion last year.

Helping to safeguard consumers is one of my top priorities. My Senate colleagues and I have worked hard to go after those unscrupulous individuals who try to cheat people out of their hard-earned dollars. I am proud the Michigan Senate has led the way in passing strong consumer protections, including legislation targeting mortgage fraud, identity theft and fraudulent contractors.

You can find out about these issues, as well as our efforts to improve food safety and ban lead in toys in my online, interactive **Consumer Report** at www.SenatorJohnPappageorge.com or by clicking [here](#). Along with the latest news on consumer legislation, this update provides tips and links to dozens of useful consumer sites.

Visit www.SenatorJohnPappageorge.com for an interactive Consumer Report

March is Reading Month Bookmark

Contact my office for your free bookmarks or cut out the one below.

reading
makes
you smile



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Looking for something that is both fun and educational for the children in your life? Why not take a trip to the State Capitol where you can take tours of the capitol building, visit the Library of Michigan and learn about our state's history at the Michigan Historical Center. Click [here](#) to learn more!

Questions or Comments?

If you have any questions or comments regarding information in this newsletter, or wish to be removed from or added to the mailing list, please contact my office at the following information:

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